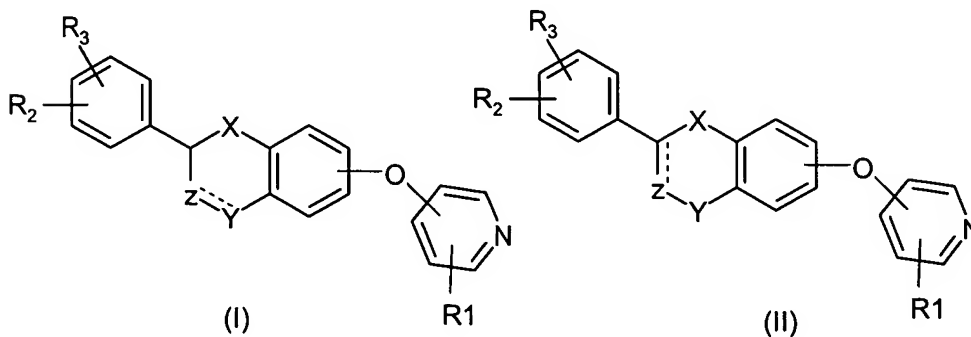


**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A compound of formula (I) or (II):



wherein

X is -O-, -CH<sub>2</sub>- or -C(O)-;

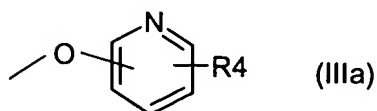
Z is -CHR<sub>12</sub>- or valence bond;

Y is -CH<sub>2</sub>-, -C(O)-, CH(OR<sub>13</sub>)-, -O-, -S-;

provided that in case Z is a valence bond, Y is not C(O);

the dashed line represents an optional double bond in which case Z is -CR<sub>12</sub>- and Y is -CH<sub>2</sub>-, -C(O)- or CH(OR<sub>10</sub>)- (in formula II) or -CH- (in formula I);

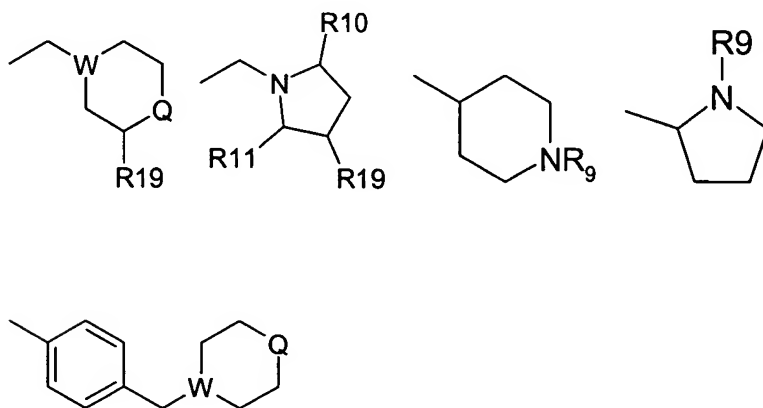
R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are independently H, lower alkyl, lower alkoxy, -NO<sub>2</sub>, halogen, -CF<sub>3</sub>, -OH, benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa)



$R_1$  is H, CN, halogen,  $-\text{CONH}_2$ ,  $-\text{COOR}_{15}$ ,  $-\text{CH}_2\text{NR}_{15}\text{R}_{18}$ ,  $\text{NHC(O)R}_5$ ,  $\text{NHCH}_2\text{R}_5$ ,  $\text{NHR}_{20}$ ,  $\text{NR}_{21}\text{R}_{22}$ ,  $\text{NHC(NH)NHCH}_3$  or, in case the compound is of formula (II) wherein the optional double bond exists or in case  $R_2$  or  $R_3$  is benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa) ~~or in case the pyridine ring of formula (I) or (II) is attached to the oxygen atom in 3, 4 or 5 position~~,  $R_1$  can also be  $-\text{NO}_2$  or  $\text{NR}_{16}\text{R}_{17}$ ;

$R_4$  is H,  $-\text{NO}_2$ , CN, halogen,  $-\text{CONH}_2$ ,  $-\text{COOR}_{15}$ ,  $-\text{CH}_2\text{NR}_{15}\text{R}_{18}$ ,  $-\text{NR}_{16}\text{R}_{17}$ ,  $-\text{NHC(O)R}_5$  or  $-\text{NHC(NH)NHCH}_3$ ;

$R_5$  is alkyl substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxy, or carboxyalkyl, in which the alkyl portion is optionally substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxyl,  $-\text{CHR}_6\text{NR}_7\text{R}_8$  or one of the following groups:



W is N or CH;

Q is  $\text{CHR}_{14}$ ,  $\text{NR}_9$ , S or O;

$R_6$  is H or lower alkyl;

$R_7$  and  $R_8$  are independently H, acyl, lower alkyl or lower hydroxyalkyl;

$R_9$  is H, lower alkyl or phenyl;

$R_{10}$  and  $R_{11}$  are independently H or lower alkyl;

$R_{12}$  is H or lower alkyl;

$R_{13}$  is H, alkylsulfonyl or acyl;

$R_{14}$  is H, -OH, -COOR<sub>15</sub>;

$R_{15}$  is H or lower alkyl;

$R_{16}$  and  $R_{17}$  are independently H, acyl, alkylsulfonyl, -C(S)NHR<sub>18</sub> or  
-C(O)NHR<sub>18</sub>;

$R_{18}$  is H or lower alkyl;

$R_{19}$  is H or -OH;

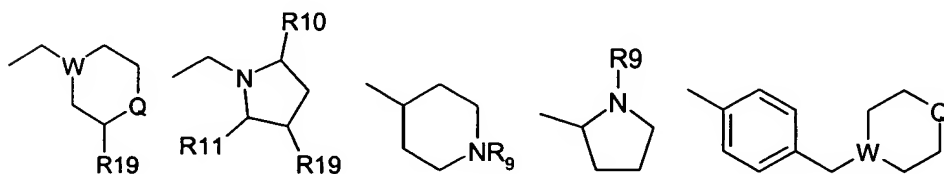
$R_{20}$  is a pyridinyl group optionally substituted with a -NO<sub>2</sub> group;

$R_{21}$  and  $R_{22}$  are lower alkyl;

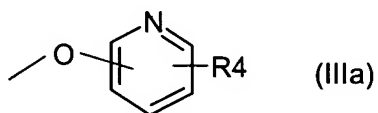
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

2. (Original) A compound according to claim 1 wherein  $R_1$  is -NHC(O) $R_5$ , X is O,  
Y is CH<sub>2</sub> and Z is CHR<sub>12</sub>.

3. (Original) A compound according to claim 2 wherein Z is CH<sub>2</sub> and  $R_5$  is alkyl  
substituted with 1-3 substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino  
and hydroxy, or carboxyalkyl, in which the alkyl portion is optionally substituted with 1-3  
substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, amino and hydroxyl,  
-CHR<sub>6</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or one of the following groups:



4. (Original) A compound according to claim 1 wherein  $R_2$  or  $R_3$  is a benzyloxy or a group of formula (IIIa)



5. (Original) A compound according to claim 4 wherein  $R_4$  is  $NO_2$ .

6. (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim 4 wherein  $R_1$  is  $NO_2$ .

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Original) A method for inhibiting  $Na^+/Ca^{2+}$  exchange mechanism in a cell, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (New) A compound according to claim 5 wherein  $R_1$  is  $NO_2$ .